REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8-16, 18-28 and 30-46 were pending in the Application prior to the outstanding Office Action. In the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8-16, 18-28 and 30-46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). Applicants have cancelled claims 27-38, 43-44 and 46. Therefore, Applicant's will not provide a response to the examiner's rejection of these claims.

I. RESPONSE TO REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

On page 2 of the Office Action mailed on August 8, 2005, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8-16, 18-28 and 30-46 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,470,227 issued to Rangachari et al. (*"Rangachari"*), in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,463,352 issued to Tadokoro et al. (*"Tadokoro"*).

Rangachari describes details of a material handling system in which object oriented programming is used to interface between applications and equipment. *Rangachari* discloses a number of software "servers" 49, all of which run on a single computer program 10 in addition to an equipment manager 18 and a workflow engine 19. In *Rangachari*, a graphical user interface is disclosed with respect to workflow definition and registration, which is the process of determining in advance the steps of a job. *Rangachari* does not disclose a user interface with respect to direct tool management, and does not disclose remote management of a tool through requests received via a network. *Rangachari* does teach or suggest a tool server, such as in a preferred embodiment of the present invention, in which a user running a Web browser can communicate over a network to operate a tool.

Tadokoro describes the management of cutting machines over a network. Status information for each cutting machine is received by a data acquisition device and reported to a machine monitor object. Remote users running Web browsers can manipulate a database containing the details of a job order, and can query the status of machines. The cutting machines of *Tadokoro* can only be queried over the network. *Tadokoro* does not disclose the ability to remotely perform any action on cutting machines (see for example, Col. 1, lines 27-30). Figures 1, 2a and 2b illustrate cutting machines 1 with a one way path to data acquisition devices 3. *Tadokoro* does not teach or suggest a tool server, such as in the preferred embodiment of the present invention, in which a user running a Web browser can communicate over a network to operate a tool.

A. Independent Claim 1 is Patently Distinguishable over *Rangachari* in view of *Tadokoro*

Claim 1 recites a tool management method, executed by an intermediate apparatus, comprising the steps of:

"receiving a first request from the client system via the network;

determining a first type of said first request based at least in part on a first predetermined field contained in said first request; and

sending a first message to the tool in response to said first request and said first type, wherein said first message is operable for controlling an action of said tool."

The apparatus that receives the first request and sends the first message acts as an intermediary between a client system and a tool (See for example Figure 1 illustrating client systems 112, 113, 114 and 115, server 110 and tools 111 and the specification at p. 8 line 13 through p. 10 line 5). In a preferred embodiment, a user at the client system can request an action of a tool, utilizing for example a Web browser. The intermediate apparatus, for example a server, will process the request from the client system, determine what message to send to which tool, and send a message to a tool to perform the requested action. The user may also interact with the server to query and modify tool configuration. The method recited in claims 1 thus recites client-server communication and server-tool communication, and allows a client system to remotely operate a tool. In a preferred embodiment of the present invention, the client system is running a Web browser and communicates using HTTP. In this way, the present invention allows a user to remotely operate tools over a network using standard protocols and software.

Rangachari describes details of a material handling system in which object oriented programming is used to interface between applications and equipment. *Rangachari* discloses a number of software "servers" 49, all of which run on a single computer program 10 in addition to an equipment manager 18 and a workflow engine 19. In *Rangachari*, a graphical user interface is disclosed with respect to workflow definition and registration, which is the process of determining in advance the steps of a job. *Rangachari* does not disclose a user interface with respect to direct tool management, and does not disclose remote management of a tool through requests received via a network. *Rangachari* does teach or suggest a tool server, such as in a

preferred embodiment of the present invention, in which a user running a Web browser can communicate over a network to operate a tool.

Tadokoro does not disclose the elements missing in *Rangachari*. *Tadokoro* describes the management of cutting machines over a network. Status information for each cutting machine is received by a data acquisition device and reported to a machine monitor object. Remote users running Web browsers can manipulate a database containing the details of a job order, and can query the status of machines. The cutting machines of *Tadokoro* can only be queried over the network. *Tadokoro* does not disclose the ability to remotely perform any action on cutting machines (see for example, Col. 1, lines 27-30). Figures 1, 2a and 2b illustrate cutting machines 1 with a one way path to data acquisition devices 3. *Tadokoro* does not teach or suggest a tool server, such as in the preferred embodiment of the present invention, in which a user running a Web browser can communicate over a network to operate a tool.

Therefore, the method recited in claim 1 is not obvious over *Rangachari* in view of *Tadokoro*.

B. Dependent Claims 2, 4-6 and 8-14 and 39-40 are Patently Distinguishable over *Rangachari* in view of *Tadokoro*

Dependent claims 2, 4-6, 8-14, 39 and 40 depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 1. These dependent claims include all of the limitations of the independent claim from which they depend. Applicants respectfully assert that dependent claims 2, 4-6, 8-14, 39 and 40 are allowable for at least the reasons set forth above concerning independent claim 1.

C. Independent Claim 15 is Patently Distinguishable over *Rangachari* in view of *Tadokoro*

Claim 15 recites a system that includes:

"circuitry operable for receiving a first request from a client system via a network;

said circuitry operable for determining a first type of said first request based at least in part on a first predetermined field contained in said first request; and

said circuitry operable for sending a first message to a tool in response to said first request and said first type, wherein said first message is operable for

controlling an action of said tool."

For at least the same reasons discussed above regarding claim 1, the system recited in claim 15 is not obvious over *Rangachari* in view of *Tadokoro*.

D. Dependent Claims 16, 18-26, 41, 42 and 45 are Patently Distinguishable over *Rangachari* in view of *Tadokoro*

Dependent claims 16, 18-26, 41, 42 and 45 depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 15. These dependent claims include all of the limitations of the independent claim from which they depend. Applicants respectfully assert that dependent claims 16, 18-26, 41, 42 and 45 are allowable for at least the reasons set forth above concerning independent claim 15.

Additional Remarks

The references cited by the Examiner but not relied upon have been reviewed, but are not believed to render the claims unpatentable, either singly or in combination.

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application are allowable, and a Notice of Allowance is requested.

Enclosed is a PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.136 for extending the time to respond up to and including today, November 22, 2005.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-3548 for any matter in connection with this response, including any fee for extension of time, which may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: November 22, 2005

By: _____
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